



# SALS JOURNAL

*a publication of the Southern Appalachian Labor School*

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## Festival Celebrates 30 Years of SALS

On June 2, SALS' Solidarity Festival will celebrate 30 years of service in Fayette and adjacent counties. This year's festival marks a landmark year and a major accomplishment for the organization. The festival will take place at the SALS Community Center and grounds at Beards Fork. The anticipation of getting together with old and new friends, good food, good weather and good entertainment always gets me excited about the SALS Solidarity Festival.

The festival gives everyone the opportunity to show his or her support for the organization while having a really great day. We will have loads of local talent to keep you entertained and the staff will provide hot dogs, drinks, nachos, chicken and other food for a minimal price to cover cost. Entertainment will include Randy Gilke and HiRise and many other local musicians. Come out and show your support for the great community work that the SALS family has been doing for the past thirty years. So mark that calendar! The date is June 2, 2007 from 1 PM until we get tired of dancing!



*Director John David addresses MLK Day Breakfast  
SALS Journal*

## Martin Luther King Jr. Day: “On”, not “Off”

Southern Appalachian Labor School observed its annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 15, 2007 at the SALS Community Center Building in Beards Fork and in the Community. The day began with a “Unity in Our Community” breakfast for the community hosted by Virgil Payne, community volunteer, along with SALS VISTAs and Staff folks. Donations from Allen Breckenridge, William Johnson Jr., William Austin and SALS provided food and the breakfast was prepared by William Austin, who is also a volunteer for SALS. Nearly 80 people from Page, Robson, Beards Fork, Kincaid, Deepwater, Montgomery, and the SALS Family attended the breakfast and listened to several inspirational messages provided by SALS Board Chair, Helen M. Powell, SALS Director John David, and Ms. Kathrine Atwater from Boomer.

The SALS work crews spent the rest of the day working on home repairs throughout Fayette County. As an example, site supervisor George Hensley took three SALS AmeriCorps members (Chris Shaver, Sue Navicki, and David Flick) to the home of Vincent Coles in North Page for the purpose of constructing an extension to a wheelchair ramp. The job consisted of repairing a previous SALS ramp and adding another 9 foot section in order to moderate the incline and avoid mud. As the crew began, an ambulance arrived to take Mr. Coles for his treatment and shortly after they finished, the ambulance returned. The crew was able to witness use of the ramp as a service accomplishment for “A day “On”, not a day “Off”, at SALS.

# Steel to Subsidy is Unsustainable

*Dr. John P. David*

Recently it was announced that the former headquarters of Weirton Steel would be the site for a new Wal-Mart. Weirton's mayor, interviewed on West Virginia Public Radio, expressed delight that the decision would create over 150 "new jobs".

The irony of this development is obvious. The people of the northern panhandle, including company personnel and union members, have fought mightily over the years for tariffs and quotas on foreign steel imports in order to protect decent jobs --- jobs with livable wages, pensions, and health care benefits. At one time, 13,000 workers were employed at Weirton Steel and its predecessor, National Steel. To now have a situation where the site of the firm's headquarters becomes a gigantic outlet for imported trinkets employing low-wage sales people is a bitter finale to the good fight.

Wal-Mart is no panacea. It is not coming to Weirton because the area is booming. In fact, that metropolitan area leads the nation in population loss. It is coming there to sell cheap goods to those who are left. Since spendable income in the area is down, this business decision can only be successful for Wal-Mart if it gobbles up the sales already being made by the other merchants in the vicinity.

Many people make the mistake in thinking that a new store or shopping mall "creates jobs". In fact, unless the area is expanding, the opposite is true. At best, the jobs are replacement jobs from other stores that close. At worse, the jobs are fewer, since the new store consists of redesigned space to maximize the sales volume per employee, thereby selling more stuff per employee than what previously occurred elsewhere. Consultant Thomas Miller, in a study focused on the impact of the new Wal-Mart in Fayette County, noted that Wal-Mart "typically spends about 40 percent fewer dollars on payroll" than local businesses. Based on sales volume, profits increase while employee costs decrease.

Another consequence falls into the category of spillover costs, which are costs of production that are externalized to other parties and society. With industrial jobs, such as in steel, attempts were made to contain spillover with pollution control requirements and similar efforts to insure that costs were internalized as much as possible. Legislative efforts were mounted to insure that those

efforts became standards imposed throughout the U.S. and, to the extent possible, worldwide so that there would be a fair playing field in the production process.

Wal-Mart has spillover costs that are extremely difficult to contain. John Dicker, in his book "The United State of Wal-Mart", cites academic studies that show Wal-Mart workers readily depend on public welfare and housing benefits in order to survive. The House Committee on Education and Welfare released a study that showed a typical new Wal-Mart costs taxpayers \$500,000 annually in tax breaks, road subsidies, and utility services. The Wall Street Journal noted that Wal-Mart has devised a scheme to save hundreds of millions in taxes by paying rent to itself and then deducting that amount from taxes in 25 states. Recently, Wal-Mart was fined \$134,540 for child labor violations in Connecticut, Arkansas, and New Hampshire. Overall, Wal-Mart has been extremely successful in externalizing its costs to taxpayers and society as a whole while simultaneously creating a giant that has become West Virginia's largest private employer.

Throughout the U.S. economy, the definitive shift of work toward part-time, low-wage, and casual noncareer employment is poised to cause major economic and social consequences. People do not have health care coverage. People will not have a pension and adequate retirement savings. People will not have time to volunteer and have a family life. People will not feel good about their future career options. People will not proudly feel they are part of contributing something to the industrial might of the country and something special to the social fabric of this society. Furthermore, while this shift has been gradual, the economy is about to have a major jolt when people receiving Black Lung compensation and pensions from the former unionized industrial jobs pass away, thereby leaving a substan-

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# Director's Report

John David

The past period has been one with both highs and lows. We were saddened with those around us who have passed away, including RED Newkirk's husband Tony, Debbie Spurlock's brother Wayne, William Waddell, and Bill Eddy. All of these people volunteered with SALS and they will be deeply missed.

As previously noted, SALS faces new challenges this year. The YouthBuild program has been moved from HUD to the U.S. Department of Labor and we seek clarity on changes that will occur. The West Virginia Housing Development Fund has redesigned its HOME program, which was one that we often used to place low income families in our newly built homes. As of the upcoming federal fiscal year, only 25 homes state-wide will be allocated funds in this manner, with the balance of the money being allocated to a blend of other leveraged monies. The result has caused consternation for our housing and housing counseling staff, which now includes (all wearing other hats as well) Brenda Winter, Jessica Williams, Debbie Spurlock, and Artie Mullins. All four have successfully attended various trainings, including housing counseling, and have passed with flying colors.

Several of our grants awarded in 2006 are still tied up in paperwork formalities, thereby preventing funds from being available. They include YouthBuild, Rural Housing and Economic Development, and USDA's Housing Preservation Grants. We were also successful in obtaining two awards from the Federal Home Loan Bank in Pittsburgh and renewed support from the Benedum Foundation. We also recently received a supplemental allocation of West Virginia tax credits and seek donated items or property for which we can provide state tax credits. To date we have received vehicles, building materials, and cash and we thank all for their support. If you have something to donate, please give me a call!

Donations also take place in the contribution of time. Many college groups, individuals with Global Volunteers, and faith-based groups have come already this year and many more are on route. We are booked for over 1500 volunteers during calendar year 2007. Several volunteers have been here before and it is always inspirational to welcome them back to their home away from home. Volunteer orientations have involved many



*AmeriCorps members install a wheelchair ramp on home for "Make a Difference Day"*

of us on the staff and lately have also included WVU-Tech's President Charles Bayless and Admission Director/Dean of Students Lou Levy.

Several of us attended the YouthBuild national meetings in California and were updated on developments. While this information was extremely helpful, we were also shocked that so many other YouthBuild sites are closing down due to lack of funding during the last funding round.

One of our major challenges will be how to continue our children's programs at the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork. Our Energy Express program has a funding shortfall from the 21st Century collaborative this summer, several key VISTAs will be reaching term limits, and the 21st Century collaborative will be entering its final funding year on July 1. At the same time, the need for educational, nutritional, and health services have expanded. This summer, for example, we will be taking extra lunches to children in Montgomery from the Beards Fork kitchen.

We continue to seek funding for a walking track on the ball field adjacent to the Community Center. Obesity, preventive health care, and tobacco cessation are the focus of our new Community Wellness Program that is tied to the regular visits to the Center by Dr. Dan Doyle, M.D., from the New River Health Association. The Substance Prevention initiative, which is a collaborative with us, New River, Fayette County's Sheriff, and several other entities, was funded for a pilot period in order to better prepare the initiative proposal.

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# Senior Program Promotes Community Involvement

By Vickie Mullins

The Southern Appalachian Labor School has begun a program for senior citizens in the Beards Fork/Page/Kincaid/Robson/Oak Hill areas. SALS sponsored trips for seniors. Virgil Payne, one of our Senior volunteers and newest SALS Board Member, drives the SALS van twice a month on various outings. Some of the seniors don't have transportation and others don't drive at all! The seniors enjoyed riding the van to the mall, stores, the display of Christmas lights, and eating out with their friends. Virgil and Allen (helper) have helped the seniors to become involved in community functions. Through this program, the seniors were able to socialize and engage in fellowship together. Virgil's plan is to continue volunteering and supporting the senior program.

## Volunteers 2007

Artie Mullins

SALS welcomed our first volunteers of the new year in March. The groups that worked with us included volunteers from Juniata College, from Pennsylvania; Rutgers University from New Jersey, Florida State University from Miami; the University of Illinois; Appalachian State University from North Carolina; Vanderbilt University from Tennessee; Northwestern University from Chicago; Madison Area Technical College from Wisconsin; Bowdoin College from Maine, and a Global Volunteer Team. The groups contributed work at Hilltop, North Page, Oak Hill, Boomer, Beards Fork and New Page.

The newcomers Juniata and Florida State along with returning Vanderbilt students all reported they had a wonderful week of service and made many new friends. Our entire organization benefited from their stay. The second round of volunteers was composed of two college groups, Appalachian State and Rutgers. These students demonstrated a real love for the area and bonded immediately with our youth. The last weeks of March brought us, the University of Illinois, Northwestern University, Bowdoin College and Global Volunteers. The University of Illinois and Northwestern shared living quarters in the SALS Community Center. Both groups



*Billy Payne entertains volunteers with his banjo.*

traveled from Illinois so they became fast friends. For the entire week the center was full of youthful life. Billy Payne entertained the entire group on Wednesday night, and the week ended with an "8<sup>th</sup> Grade Dance". I even kicked off my shoes and danced like I was twelve again.

The Bowdoin/Global Volunteers Group spent their week in the SALS annex. This was a fun but goal oriented bunch that came to us with an industrious spirit. Bier Kraichak, the leader of the group, had spent his 2006 spring break working with disadvantaged street people in Thailand and his co-leader served in Katrina devastated areas the previous year. Their selfless and tireless effort to help Jim at the Hilltop site was impressive. While here, the group got to take a half-day rafting trip with our friendly partners at Adventures Mountain Rivers in Hico. We hope to see Bowdoin again next year.

The last group arrived the first week in April. This group traveled via Amtrak from Madison, Wisconsin. The students from Madison Area Technical College were met with all the fanfare we could muster on a Sunday morning. WVUIT president, Charles Bayless, and Lou Levy director of admissions and Wisconsin native, joined John David, Brenda Winter, George Hensley, David Flick, and myself at the Montgomery arrival of the 18 eager volunteers. The only thing missing was a marching band. The arrival was followed up with a short orientation, lunch and a half-day trip down the Gauley for the travel weary students. This group worked and played hard for the whole week. They bonded with our youth, our neighbors, and even our neighbor's dogs. I'm exhausted after a month of hosting over 100 energetic young volunteers. But you know what, the year is just beginning and a voice tells me, "You ain't seen nothing yet"

# What's Cooking at SALS!

*Vickie Mullins*

What's cooking at SALS? That is the question that folks are asking when the phone rings off the hook. Our senior volunteer, Virgil Payne, has had several fundraisers this year and he has enjoyed helping with the various programs at SALS. One week, he held a fish fry sale and sold over 100 dinners. The next week, he sold Rib dinners for \$5.00 a plate. It was also a success. We have several groups in from out of state volunteering and he also decided to sell chicken dinners to 17 college students and some community folks.

The collected proceeds sponsored an Easter party for the children, a dance with a D.J. and helped take areas seniors on outings. Mr. Payne also held Bingo night, which gave the seniors and folks in the community a chance to have fun and win nice gifts. Mr. Payne received several donations for each event. The money he made from the sales helped buy the prizes, including fine jewelry, household gifts, an area rug, and the grand prize which was a color television and DVD player.

Thanks to all the folks who helped with the fundraisers: Charlene Newkirk, Sandy Grasty, Linda Dillard, William Austin, Lynn Austin, Kim Barrett, Lisa Manley, Debbie Spurlock, Artie Mullins, Muriel Salter, and Vickie Mullins. A special thanks to our Chair person, Ms. Helen M. Powell for taking time out to come down and help.

## Young Leaders Conference 2007

*Alisha Young, YouthBuild Member*

Recently, I took a trip to Washington, D.C. for the "Young Leaders Conference for YouthBuild members. It took place from March 1<sup>st</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup>. It was actually a two-part conference. The first two days were considered a Rural Caucus for those of us from rural areas. It gave a small group of us a chance to get used to each other before the larger group came. It was a great opportunity to see how other rural YouthBuild programs worked. We worked on comparing different opportunities in different rural areas. They also took us to the Smithsonian Museum and to the White House just to get a feel for the city before the others arrived.

The rest of the conference members arrived on

Saturday and the Young Leaders Conference officially began. The first evening was orientation and getting a feel for everyone. On the second day we participated in various workshops to build our leadership skills. That night we went on a night tour of all of the city monuments and ate dinner at the ESPN Zone restaurant. The third day consisted of the Young Leaders Council elections and the Talent Show. The person responsible for starting YouthBuild (Dorothy Stoneman) came to the conference on this day to watch the elections. I was extremely excited to meet such a down to earth woman who just cares so much for people. I participated in both of these events. For the Young Leaders Council I had to first write a 200 word essay stating what I felt I could bring to the Young Leaders Council (YLC) and what the council could do for me. The second part consisted of writing and giving two minute speech about the impact that the YouthBuild program has had on me and why should I be voted into the YLC. Then finally all of the conference members had to vote on twelve new members and I was picked as one out of the twelve new members!! Later that evening there was the talent show which was a blast. I and two other girls performed a Hip-Hop song/dance piece and we then danced on stage with a group of guys rapping. There was also a Samoan art dance and various solos.

The final day was Capitol Hill Day when all of the conference members represented their state by going to meet each state's senator requesting support for our YouthBuild programs. I met with representatives of Robert C. Byrd and Nick Rahall. We also as a group met Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts which was very exciting for me.

The whole experience was great. I met a lot of different people from across the country. I also had the chance to further my career with YouthBuild by becoming a member of the YLC (Young Leaders Council).

## Preparing for Home Repairs

*Debra Spurlock*

Well, winter has come and gone. As warm weather approaches so does Group WorkCamps. Artie's new "AmeriCorps Crew" has been very busy out writing up homes to be repaired. Once again this year we have a camp in the Oak Hill area and one in the Smithers area.

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Having the camps in these two areas helps us to serve a wide range of folks. Getting things done is a consuming task. We have to turn in approximately 85 home repair write-ups per camp. The write-ups must be very detailed. They must also include very accurate driving directions. Getting the directions exactly right is very important. Hundreds of Group WorkCamps volunteers come from all over and they depend on our directions to get them exactly where they are going. After all the write-ups are finished and all the paper work is sent in to Colorado, we anxiously await the campers arrival.

The Group WorkCamps program is just one of the many things I work with at SALS. I have been involved in quite a few housing counseling classes. I am one of four certified counselors. We help to prepare potential home buyers to become successful homeowners.

The phone is always ringing here at SALS. So many folks in Fayette County are in need of home repairs. Our waiting list keeps on growing. I wish we could help each and every one of them. We do the best we can and hope to continue to help as many people as possible.

Housing issues aren't the only issues addressed at SALS. We have an Emergency Food and Shelter Program. We help area folks with food and utility payments if they have a referral from the DHHR. We also have the SHARE PROGRAM, where you can purchase a box of food containing fresh fruits, vegetables, meats and desserts for \$18. In order to purchase the food for this low price all you have to do is to volunteer to help someone for two hours a month. I think this is really a great program and I wish more people would participate. I, myself, purchase the food on a monthly basis.

So, as you can see, there are lots of things to do, many jobs to complete, and lots and lots of people to help. So, I guess I better get back to work!

## After School & Summer Programs

*Iris Adkins, AmeriCorps/Vista*

Hi, I'm Iris Adkins. The After School Program is over for the past year. During the after school program the children got off the school bus and had a snack. Two teachers then help them with their homework. Then they play and or did other activities, had a hot dinner and

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*Drywall board being installed in new home at Hilltop*

were driven home.

The summer program started the day after school was over. It is about the same program as the after school program. Everyone stays very busy with the children.

Also, we have "The New River/Beards Fork Clinic" at SALS every other Friday, Dr. Dan Doyle comes to Beards Fork to see DOL, AmeriCorps and other members of SALS, as well as people in the community. One of my duties is to drive people to SALS and drive them home.

Easter was a lot of fun for everyone. We had an Easter egg hunt for the children.

Thanks to SALS there are a lot of programs for everyone.

## Construction Manager Report

*Vickie Smith*

We are off to a great start in the first half of the year. We have had several college groups and global volunteers in this year. We are moving well on our rehabs and the new construction in the Oak Hill area. Our dorm is underway in Beards Fork. We are preparing for our very large groups in the middle of summer.

We have started on our main sewage line extension at the Hilltop site. Engineers have met with me at the Hilltop sites and our electrical services have been installed for the new homes. We are now in compliance with the 2 ½ acre tract at Hilltop with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection. Our hard

work and tons of seed has now controlled the rain run off from the site.

We are still dealing with a lot of theft on our sites and have lost several thousand dollars of valuable tools that will have an effect on the job production this year. As of this date none of our large tools have been recovered, ex: drywall lift, miter saws, air compressors, generators, etc. This is an unfortunate situation for our organization. We have struggled to get these tools over the years so that we can make great change in our community.

## **SALS YouthBuild/DOL Report**

*Kathryn South-Adkins*

This has been a very difficult Spring or Winter. We really can't tell the difference anymore. Is this crazy weather the result of Global Warming? This is something to ponder on the cold windy nights in April and May. Anyway, work continues no matter what the weather and young people are out trying to build and repair the houses in Fayette County to learn carpentry skills and hopefully, a better job in construction or possible, start their own construction business.

One of our Department of Labor Re-entry youth participants, got a job with a builder who lives and works in the Fayette county area. This is a step up for the young man and more money to start out his work experience. This is the ultimate goal, for all of the youth to find jobs in the area and not have to move to the South for employment. With the five different housing projects starting around the New River Gorge, there should be jobs available for skilled workers.

SALS staff and youth participated in several different training workshops this spring. More workshops are planned for early summer on various topics which will increase the skills of all those attending.

Five young adults were recruited into the YouthBuild/DOL program this quarter. Three of the youth are from the Kanawha Valley, and are working with George Hensley in that area. Tony Fenton, who is from Page is our out-of-school WIA participant, and he is doing a great job and has the opportunity to go to college. He would like to open his own auto mechanics business in the Page area. Jessie Maddox and Joey Taylor are from the Montgomery, Boomer area and plan to use the program to further their educational endeavors.

The youth have been working with several groups of volunteers from colleges and from Global Volunteers and have formed friendships with several of the folks who came to Beards Fork, WV, to help repair houses and learn more about the culture of the region.

We had two visits from the YouthBuild/DOL staff to do surveys and to look at our operation, They also talked with others involved with the Department of Labor Re-entry program such as Renee Harper and Charlie Bryant from the Day Reporting Center on Summerlee Road and Sheriff Laird who works closely with adjudicated youth trying to assist in getting them back on track with employment and getting an education. This is a great program if everybody does what is expected of them and the youth get their goals accomplished.

## **Brenda's News**

*Brenda Winter*

This has been a busy time for me. I have been learning how to assist people in obtaining affordable housing. I have learned about housing regulations, assisted in Housing Counseling classes, taken countless applications from people wanting to find affordable houses to buy, and attended several trainings to learn how to put all the necessary paperwork together. We have also had classes on how to assist people in keeping their houses since foreclosure is becoming a huge problem for people, especially the low-income and elderly. Housing is a big challenge for me, because of all the paperwork and regulations. It takes a lot of time, patience and work to get everything right.

I have also been busy, along with several others, working on the "Craft Factory". This is a project started to help recycle used materials from the job sites, such as scraps of wood and anything else which would be discarded, but could still be made into neat things. Our goal in this project is to work with the youth to make "Appalachian" crafts for volunteers and community people interested in these types of things. Crafts seem to be in demand (especially in the spring and summer months, when people get out to spruce up their homes and decorate for the seasons) with the youth who work on the crafts with the volunteers who are with us assisting SALS with the housing projects. A percentage of the proceeds of the sales of these crafts will then be given to the students who made them, with the rest of the proceeds going back into the account. This project was

*Continued on next page*

slow getting off the ground, but now with the warmer weather arriving has picked up tremendously. A small brochure will be made listing the items and prices. We feel this is a good project and have many talented people assisting in this endeavor.

I also am still working with Kathryn and Artie with the youth and attend quarterly Youth Council meetings, (unless there is a conflict with another project). We sometimes have to travel to conferences to learn new ways to make the programs stronger, and have lately been doing lots of conference calls to lower travel costs and still stay connected to the various programs and other groups.

So, all in all, SALS keeps us all busy trying to do good things and helping those who need someone to help make their lives better. Hopefully, we are making an impact on peoples lives, even if sometimes it's just to brighten some lonely elders day, or to show the youth we work with that someone cares about them as we provide training to produce decent and safe housing for the people in our community.

## Housing and Jessica

*Jessica Williams*

Hi, it's Jessica Williams, Housing Counselor, here at SALS. In August, 2006 Brenda Winter, Artie Mullins, Nia Jackson, and myself traveled to Washington, D.C. for training. The training was with Neighborhood Works America. The training Nia and I took was called "Train the Trainer" while Brenda and Artie took "Housing Counseling; Principles, Practices, and Techniques". It was an intense week of learning techniques and laws of teaching a Home Buyers Education class. It wasn't all work though since we got to go out in the city during our free time. I had a really good time. We rode the Metro to Union Station. From there we walked to the Nation's Capitol, the White House, Washington Memorial, and other places in the city. After the week of training we had to take a test to be certified. We all passed our tests.

After we returned, I was sent to another training with Neighborhood Works America at Tamarack in Beckley, West Virginia in March. This was the same training Brenda and Artie took in D.C. It was a packed week of learning everything from reading a credit report to how to do one-on-one counseling. Just like the

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previous training, I had to take a test at the end of it and I passed. But, to be certified, I had to take a second part of the training called "Basic Loss Mitigation". Brenda, Artie, and I attended the second part of "Housing Counseling: Principles, Practices, and Techniques" called "Basic Loss Mitigation" in Charleston, WV. We attended the training in April and we all passed. As a result, SALS now has three certified housing counselors.

## WVU Tech Volunteers

*Jessica Williams*

For the past three months I have been supervising fifteen WVU-Tech students from Dr. John David's Community Service class and Professor Jan Rezek's Appalachian Culture class. They have spent a total of 600 hours doing community service with SALS. The students have dug deep and gotten dirty doing community service. They have been out getting paint, soil, and water samples from houses for the SALS EPA Lead Testing project. They have measured houses for new paint, porches, and weatherization for Group Workcamps. They also picked up debris, swept sidewalks, and raked leaves at the SALS Community Center in Beards Fork. I would just like to express my gratitude to all the students for their kindness, eagerness, and sometimes patience to help others in their community. I would also like to give Glenda Maddy a special thanks for "putting up with me" and helping immensely with coordination.

## Beards Fork Clinic

Lisa Manley, Vicki Mullins, and Doctor Dan Doyle continue to provide medical visits, work physicals, and preventive care at the Beards Fork Center on the second Friday of every month from 1 to 4 p.m. The clinic team has worked a lot on billing issues recently to make sure that SALS workers don't get any surprise bills. At this point in time, YouthBuild participants without health insurance have their \$10 minimum sliding scale obligation picked up by SALS, so they pay nothing. SALS employees with Health Insurance (Americorps and other SALS administrative staff) pay whatever they would if they were seen at any other New River site. They receive a sliding scale adjustment on their share of the bill de-

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## Consider a volunteer vacation

If you'd like to spend your next getaway giving back, here are some other organizations you can contact.



### American Red Cross:

- Travel to affected areas during national disasters to provide food, shelter and other services to victims.
- Visit [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or contact a local Red Cross chapter.



### Earthwatch Institute:

- Work with scientists doing field research on environmental issues. Projects range from counting fish on a coral reef and recording monkeys' behavior to mapping water resources.
- Most projects last 10 to 14 days and take place all over the world. Family trips are available for children over 10.
- Costs range from \$500 to \$4,400. For more information, check out [www.earthwatch.org](http://www.earthwatch.org), or call 800-776-0188.



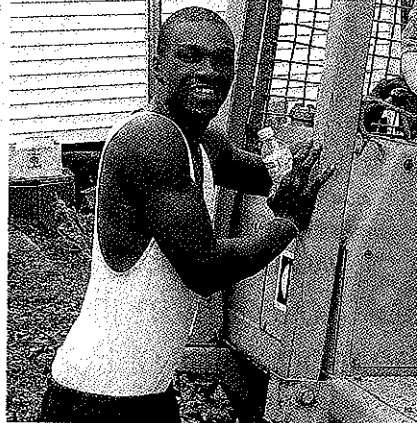
### Habitat for Humanity:

- Help the less fortunate build homes for their families. Project sites are across the United States and in nearly 100 countries worldwide. Habitat has several volunteer programs and offers special opportunities for women, girls and young adults.
- Costs range from \$900 to \$2,200. Check out [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org), or call 229-924-6935 for more information.



CUT OUT AND KEEP

“The trip made me understand how much people are alike.”



Mary Ann (front right) on site.



### VACATION MISSION:

## To help build homes in rural West Virginia

Mary Ann De Jesus, 33, Queens, N.Y.

A busy New York human resources director, Mary Ann De Jesus passed up spas and luxury hotels to spend her vacation in small-town West Virginia, sleeping on a rickety bunk bed in a bare-bones room she shared with 12 strangers. Yet Mary Ann found this trip to be one of the most rewarding experiences of her life.

She volunteers in New York, teaching computer skills to senior citizens twice a month—but Mary Ann wanted more. “I liked the idea of seeing something through rather than giving an hour here or there,” she says. Through Global Volunteers, she signed up to go to Beards Fork, an impoverished mining town, for a week in 2004.

Every day, following a breakfast meeting at 7 a.m., Mary Ann did manual labor, helping to build a house for a local family. She hung siding, plastered drywall and sanded walls. Working alongside Mary Ann and other volunteers were local young people who were learning construction skills. “One young man showed me how to apply mud between the seams of drywall,” says Mary Ann, who found learning from the people in Beards Fork especially satisfying. “With Global Volunteers, it’s not about doing the work for the people, or just getting the project done. It’s about empowering the community.”

She built strong bonds with locals. “They asked me about New York, whether I ever saw celebrities,” Mary Ann recalls. For her part, Mary Ann learned about those who toil under hazardous conditions in West Virginia coal mines. “People do work that shortens their lives, but it’s all to support their family. The trip made me understand how much people are alike. They want to have security. They love their children and want the best for them.”

Mary Ann now considers traditional vacations boring. In fact, this summer, she’s heading to Alaska to build houses. “I can’t imagine not continuing to do this,” she says. “It’s just so fulfilling.”

### Plan a trip like Mary Ann’s

\* **Global Volunteers** runs such projects as caring for at-risk children, teaching English and repairing homes. Costs are tax-deductible and run from \$750 for one week in the U.S. to \$2,595 for three weeks abroad. For details, go to [www.globalvolunteers.org](http://www.globalvolunteers.org), or call 800-487-1074.

ICONICAGETTY IMAGES (WOMAN AT AIRPORT)

### ***Steel to Subsities, continued from page two***

tial spending void that is not being replaced.

While some valiantly claim that the answer is “more capitalism”, their hidden message is actually championing fewer restrictions on businesses and more freedom for them to exploit. The bottom line is that as long as foot-loose businesses have no national loyalty and humane responsibility to the welfare and dignity of workers, they will scour the world for the cheapest ingredients, cheapest workers, and cheapest taxes under the guise of “free trade”. They know that cheap products can be sold cheaply to those who have increasingly less – and the spiraling downward cycle continues. A McClatchy Newspapers analysis of 2005 census figures found that the “number of severely poor Americans grew by 26 percent from 2000 to 2005, which was 56 percent faster than the overall poverty population grew in the same period”. During this same period, according to Rep. Jim Cooper (D-Tenn), the U.S. national debt is doubling every five years and is now \$375,000 for every working American. This situation is neither tenable nor sustainable. Thus, without question, unless national and international labor standards are imposed, and imposed soon, economic prospects are grim for those who are powerless.

### ***Director's Report, continued from page three***

Next to the Community Center, the new Dormitory is breaking ground. Many problems have occurred, including a re-design that called for less cement, since cement trucks cannot navigate the underpass into Beards Fork. The underpass, by the way, was flooded again as rains hit the area.

Virgil Payne, our newest Board Member, has developed a Senior Program that includes numerous outings to various places. He is raising money for these activities with successful food sales and bingo events. He also coordinated a popular Easter Egg event for area children.

The New Year always brings to the forefront cleanup efforts and environmental concerns. SALS youth participated in Earth Day, National Youth Service Day, and AmeriCorps week with a cleanup blitz in the vicinity. We also worked on Martin Luther King Junior Day on community projects, followed by a commemorative program at the Community Center.

Professor Jan Rezek has completed our first

college-level class (Sociology of the Family) for SALS youth and staff at the Beards Fork center. This is an effort to bring WVU-Tech to SALS and begin the process of having people think about continuing their education utilizing AmeriCorps Educational Awards. Another class will take place this Fall.

The Crafts Factory project is in the process of assembling a photo-catalog of crafts build by our youth that will be available for sale to the public. This is a step in creating entrepreneurial development among our YouthBuild and Youth Offender participants.

Thanks to a small grant from the West Virginia Development Office through the Appalachian Regional Commission and the Benedum Foundation, we have conducted a wide array of workshops for youth and staff since January. The grant has also permitted us to establish six Focus Advisory Committees, which consists of community, staff, and Board people to meet and gain closer connections to our highly diverse areas of activity.

SALS continues, to join forces with efforts for regional positive change. It played a role in advocating stream cleanup and water quality standards, the newly Appalachian Action Coalition, Citizens for Clean Elections, Fayette Family Resource Network, and several other groups.

June Robinson, Program Director for WV's Promise, pointed out an error in our last newsletter. We should have given credit for our “Healthy Start” grant to WV's Promise, which is doing wonderful work in West Virginia. We apologize for the error.

We again thank you for your support and extend our hope that you will be with us at our Solidarity Festival on June 2nd.

### ***Beards Fork Clinic, continued from page eight***

pending on their income. Community members are billed just as they would be at any New River Clinic site.

The Beards Fork Clinic team has also worked on a Wellness Program for SALS employees and the community. In March, staff and community members did a “inspection walk” on the future site of the walking trail. In April, the Wellness project conducted two smoking cessation group visits attended by eight SALS employees. At present, the Wellness Program is providing a group visit session for SALS employees and community members from 1-2 pm on the second Friday of every month.

# Southern Appalachian Labor School - Who We Are

**SALS Community Center: 800-515-1349,  
304-779-2772, or 779-2280**  
**WVU-Tech office: 304-442-3042**  
**Construction Coordinator: 304-469-9721**  
**John David, Director - 304-442-3157**  
**WEB: www.sals.info**

Ron Yellets	YouthBuild Trainer
Dave Shaver	YouthBuild Trainer
George Hensley, Jr	YouthBuild Trainer
Jimmy Adkins	YouthBuild Trainer
Terry Black	YouthBuild Trainer
Jessice Williams	Housing Counselor

## Board Officers

Helen M. Powell	Chair
Marcus Wilkes	Vice Chair
Kathryn South-Adkins*	Secretary ksouth@citynet.net
Sister Clara Lill	Treasurer
John David*	Director jdavid@citynet.net

## Project Staff

\* Indicates members of the SALS Leadership Team

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## 21st Century 'Accent Education'

### After School Program:

Charlene Newkirk	Site Coordinator
Terri Harlin	Project Coordinator
Tony Canada	Project Director
Lisa Manley	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Iris Adkins	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Jessica Williams	AmeriCorps/VISTA
Debbie Ferri	Teacher
Lisa Keffer	Teacher

## New River/Beards Fork Health Clinic Project

Dr. Dan Doyle, M.D.

## G.E.D. Instructors/Fayette Co. Schools

LeeAnn Gore & Mary Lynn Flint

## WVU Extension Service

Dianne Meadows  
Debbie Tate

## Bookkeeping Team

Valarie Cowley, Ruth Lanham  
Tom Bass, Brenda Winter



**Yes,** in these difficult times I understand the importance of an organization like the Southern Appalachian Labor School. Enclosed is my contribution to keep your essential work on track and moving forward..

*Contributions to SALS are Tax deductible: Mail to SALS POB 127, Kincaid, WV 25119*

**Enclosed is: \_\_\_\$250 \_\_\_\$100 \_\_\_\$50 \_\_\_\$25 Other\$\_\_\_\_\_**

*Or print a donation form at www.sals.info*

*Please send me a thankyou gift..*

*\_\_\_\$50 +: SALS Handmade Coffee Mug, SALS License Plate, or similar item*

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SALS engages in solicitation for the purpose of acquiring funds to support the Southern Appalachian Labor School. WV residents may obtain a summary of our registration and financial documents from the Sec. of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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